

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 HA-05 EB-08

TRSE-00 OMB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00

SIL-01 LAB-04 PC-01 AGRE-00 SVC-00 OPR-02 A-01

CA-01 SCS-06 SY-05 USSS-00 FBOE-00 CCO-00 OC-06

/098 W

-----115142 252343Z /70

O R 252300Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7586

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USSOUTHCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3996

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PINR, NU

SUBJECT: SITREP 1: 25 AUGUST

1. THIS IS THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF SITREPS TO CONTINUE
AS THE SITUATION WARRANTS. SITREPS ARE PREPARED BY POL
BASED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED BY ALL MISSION ELEMENTS.

2. GENERAL STRIKE: THE STRIKE HAS STARTED; IT IS MORE
SUCCESSFUL IN THE PROVINCES THAN IN MANAGUA, WHERE IT
PICKED UP DURING THE DAY. DURING THE DAY, A NUMBER OF
BUSINESS GROUPS INCLUDING INDE AND THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE,
INDUSTRY AND CONSTRUCTION WERE ENGAGED IN MEETINGS TO DECIDE
WHETHER OR NOT TO SUPPORT THE STRIKE. ECONS SOURCES INDICATE
THAT THE STRIKE HAS BEGUN IN LEON, DIRIAMBA, CHINANDEGA, AND
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JINOTEPE. COMOFF TOURED MANAGUA AND FOUND MOST BUSINESSES
TO BE OPEN, ALTHOUGH FEW CUSTOMERS IN EVIDENCE.
SEVERAL EMB SOURCES HAVE INDICATED THAT VIRTUALLY ALL
MAJOR FOOD STORES APPEAR TO BE CLOSED BY NOON. SEVERAL
MAJOR FIRMS ALONG THE INDUSTRIAL SECTION OF THE PAN
AMERICAN HIGHWAY ARE CLOSED, BUT MOST ARE OPERATING.
SEVERAL OTHER FIRMS--INCLUDING U.S. -OWNED FIRMS--

HAVE INDICATED THAT THEIR WORKERS WILL STRIKE. THE U.S.-OWNED FIRMS HAVE REQUESTED THEIR EMPLOYEES TO NOT BE AMONG THE FIRST TO STRIKE.

3. SOME PRIVATE SECTOR OPPOSITIONISTS HAVE INDICATED THAT PRIVATE SECTOR NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT STRIKE, WHILE OTHER SOURCES INDICATE THAT MOST OF PRIVATE SECTOR IS LOOKING TOWARD INDE AND CHAMBERS FOR GUIDANCE. IT APPEARS THAT MONDAY WILL BE A KEY DAY IN DETERMINING THE DIRECTION IN WHICH STRIKE IS HEADED.

4. DISTURBANCES: EMB HAS RECEIVED CONFIRMED REPORTS THAT JINOTEPE HAS BEEN SCENE OF WIDESPREAD DISTURBANCES. DATT HAS CONFIRMED WITH GN THAT SIX PEOPLE BOMBED A TRUCK AT APPROXIMATELY 10:30 AM. THE GN HAS CAPTURED THREE AND REPORTS THE OTHER THREE WOUNDED. ADDITIONALLY, THE GN REPORTS THAT SNIPERS ARE FIRING FROM THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS IN JINOTEPE. THE GN IS PREPARING TO ELIMINATE SNIPERS. THE GN ALSO BELIEVES WEAPONS ARE CACHED WITHIN UNIVERSITY, BUT HAS NO PLANS AT PRESENT TO ENTER CAMPUS. ADDITIONAL UNCONFIRMED REPORTS HAVE INDICATED THAT AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF PERSONS ARE BOMBING ANY STORE OPEN IN JINOTEPE.

5. IN LEON, IT IS REPORTED THAT STUDENTS HAVE TAKEN TO THE STREETS IN SUPPORT OF THE STRIKE. EMB LOCALS
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HAVE REPORTED RECEIVING PHONE CALLS FROM RELATIVES INDICATING RIOTING EXISTS--BUT DATT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THIS WITH GN. GN ELEMENTS REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY RIOTERS. RUMORS OF AN FSLN ATTACK IN DIRIAMBÁ CANNOT BE CONFIRMED AT THIS TIME. IN MANAGUA, THE GN IS KEEPING A LOW PROFILE AND NO DISTURBANCES HAVE BEEN REPORTED. THE LAND BORDERS ARE QUIET.

6. MEDIA: ICA SOURCES REPORT THAT RADIO NEWS BROADCASTS HAVE BEEN WARNED NOT TO MENTION THE STRIKE OR ANY OTHER ACTIVITIES WHICH MIGHT DISRUPT PUBLIC ORDER. THUS FAR, FIVE PLN-CONTROLLED STATIONS AND TWO INDEPENDENTS HAVE RENEWED NEWS BROADCASTS. TELEVISION HAS THUS FAR CONFINED NEWS REPORTING TO READINGS OF THE FSLN COMMUNIQUE. EMB HAS ALSO RECEIVED WORD THAT LA PRENSA WAS AGAIN SHOT AT EARLIER TODAY. NO CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE REPORTED.

7 POLITICAL: POLOFF HAS QUERIED SEVERAL SOURCES ON INITIAL REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS. OFFICIAL PCN (CONSERVATIVE PARTY) SOURCES HAVE INDICATED THAT SOME INTERNAL RETHINKING OF PCN SUPPORT FOR FSLN AND GROUP

OF TWELVE IS UNDERWAY AS WELL AS RE-EXAMINATION OF PCN PARTICIPATION IN GON. POLOFF HAS LEARNED FROM SOURCE WITHIN OFFICIAL PCN THAT PARTY IS DISORIENTED AND SOME LEADERS ARE EVEN THINKING OF ABANDONING COUNTRY. OTHER GROUPS INDICATE RELUCTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN STRIKE AND FEAR OF FAO DISSOLUTION SHOULD IT FAIL.

8. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT STRIKE MAY BE TAKING HOLD OUTSIDE OF MANAGUA. WITHIN THE CAPITAL, THE LABORERS APPEAR TO BE PROVIDING THE INITIAL IMPETUS. IN VIEW OF CONTINUED POLITICAL TENSION, MOST INDEPENDENT RADIO STATIONS ARE NOT TRANSMITTING NEWS FOR FEAR OF GON CLOSURES OF FINES. PRIVATE SECTOR VIEWS FSLN COMMUNIQUE AS SETBACK BECAUSE OF OPEN OPPOSITION BY
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SANDINISTAS TO ITS INITIATIVES. MODERATE OPPOSITION LEADERS APPEAR WORRIED OVER THEIR INABILITY TO INFLUENCE EVENTS AND THE INDEPENDENT ACTION OF THE FSLN. AT PRESENT, NO INDICATIONS EXIST REGARDING GON REACTION TO EVENTS. SOME LA JOCULARLY WISHED STRIKERS GOOD

LUCK IN YESTERDAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE. THUS FAR, GN APPEARS TO BE RESPONDING ONLY WHEN DIRECTLY ATTACKED.
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